

U.S. Department of the Interior

A bald eagle is shown in mid-flight, wings spread wide, flying over a body of water. The eagle's head is white, and its body is dark. The background is a blurred landscape with trees and a clear sky.

**Travel Reinvention Lab
Findings and Recommendations**

January 1997

**Members of the
Department of the Interior
Travel Reinvention Lab**

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The DOI Travel Lab wishes to thank the 5,196 Departmental employees who took the time to tell us what worked and didn't work in the existing travel processes. Their comments, insights, frustrations, and suggestions were invaluable to our efforts, and eloquently underscore the urgency and need to streamline the Department's travel processes. Selected comments from the Customer Survey are highlighted in each of the report sections which follow.

The Travel Lab is also indebted to other federal agencies --DOD, State, GSA, and Transportation, to name a few -- for graciously sharing the experiences of their own agencies in reinventing travel. Their guidance and suggestions on pitfalls to avoid were particularly appreciated. Particular thanks are also due to three private sector organizations, Allied-Signal, General Electric Corp, and a third company that wished to remain anonymous, for describing how they reengineered travel processes in their respective companies to levels the General Accounting Office consider to be "world class".

Special thanks are owed to: Mr. Rick Iovane (Bureau of Land Management), without whose help the Customer Survey could not have been completed; Ms. Agnes Sutphin (BLM) and Ms. Jaime Nielsen (Bureau of Reclamation) who ably facilitated a few of the Travel Lab sessions; Ms. Norma Campbell from the Department's Office of Planning and Performance Management who provided many useful suggestions throughout the Lab; the U.S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of Reclamation for hosting Travel Lab meetings; each of the Department's bureaus/offices, that dedicated senior staff members to participate on the Travel Lab -- for what must have seemed an interminable amount of time--; Mr. Bob Lamb, Mr. Sky Leshner and Ms. Jody Kusek, who served as the Advisory Board to the Travel Lab and provided many invaluable suggestions throughout the entire effort; and finally, to Ms. Bonnie Cohen, the Department's Assistant Secretary-Policy, Management and Budget for her vision, leadership and determination to bring the Department's travel process up to "Best in Class" standards.

CHARTER

Department of the Interior's Travel Reinvention Laboratory

To support the goal of creating a Government that works better and costs less, the Department of the Interior is committed to finding new cost effective ways of accomplishing our mission while improving service to our customers. The Travel Reinvention Laboratory will seek new ways of accomplishing official travel within the Department to support our basic missions.

The charter of this laboratory is to think boldly, break down barriers standing in the way of getting the job done, and to improve accountability. The lab will strive to identify and drive out rules, regulations and policies that no longer make sense. The laboratory will serve as an agent of change within the Department.

Support from the Administration, the Department of the Interior, the Bureau Directors, and the Office Heads is vital for the success of the laboratory. They commit to provide:

- Waivers to operate within the law but to be liberated from regulations and policies which hinder progress.
- Freedom to be creative and innovative, and provide incentives for change within the law.
- Adequate time to evaluate the long term success of their effort.
- Budgetary support where needed.
- Empowerment.

In accepting this charter, the Laboratory Team makes a commitment to:

- Provide reinvention training to all lab members.
- Effectively utilize fully the principles and tools of quality management/reengineering.
- Define the issue, collect data, and systematically develop recommendations.
- Provide for the continual involvement of management in the process, through regular updates and other appropriate communication mechanisms.
- Facilitate a team-based approach to travel issue.
- Be creative, innovative, and customer focused.

Laboratory Title and Charge:

The Travel Process Reinvention Laboratory is chartered to improve the way in which we plan, authorize and carry out the Department of the Interior's travel program. The charge is to provide higher levels of service to travelers, to improve accountability, to reduce the direct and indirect cost of the Department's travel program, to substantially reduce the number of Travel Management Centers used by the Department, and to improve the Department's performance on Government-wide measures relating to travel programs.

Original Signed

Bonnie R. Cohen
Assistant Secretary
Policy, Management and Budget